LABOUR MONTHLY

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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A Magazine of International Labour

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THE DIAL OF HISTORY

> 'Then gather up, ye millions! in your irresistible power—the power of Peace armed with knowledge, before which War turns pale and flies! Then the era of the peoples will have arrived—and already we can see the finger of knowledge pointing the hour of emancipation on the dial of history!'

THIS comes like a May Day Greeting from friends, not afar in space but distant in time. For these words were addressed to our Chartist great-grandfathers on May 8, 1852, in the first issue of the *People's Paper*. Today, for a third of mankind 'the hour of emancipation' has long been safely reached; many millions more go forward in firm assurance that the finger moves steadily across the dial of history. There are those in whom this relentless progress strikes the madness of terror; they would hold back the hand, or indeed smash the clock altogether if they could. It is now within 'the power of Peace, armed with knowledge' to check them as they turn to more and more violence, to degrading colonial wars, to planning new Lidices against unarmed villagers, new Guernicas of bombing horrors, the foulest new weapons of warfare, the old internal lies and corruption in a new degree.

This May Day the contrast between international brotherhood and the dark forces is clear indeed. A reader to whom this magazine has been newly introduced wrote to us: 'We Americans have no Independent Magazine of International Labour—in fact we are losing our little independence rapidly as they rush like demons toward American fascism. They talk of democracy, but don't practise it.' A fellow countrywoman writes of 'the finest scholars and writers arrested, handcuffed and treated as common criminals, like our DuBois and his co-workers. Congratulations on the fight you continue waging for the cause of humanity'. With the approach of this May Day our mailbag brings letters from readers all over the world who have a common language, whatever the tongue they speak. 'For you my thanks and my greetings,' writes one from a Fascist prison camp. An Australian sends 'thanks for the inspired writing which has for many years been a sure guide in the dark political jungle'. From India, from the great African continent, from China—from countries which are battlegrounds or lands in all the zest of peaceful reconstruction—letters in that common language reach us daily. And also from readers in Britain, who increasingly show how closely they feel drawn together by fraternal links with those in other lands through the articles and the news of readers appearing in *Labour Monthly*. Says 'Red Sergeant': 'An extra 2s. 6d. this month for the article *Mother China;* we shall find our Mother Britains, too, when the time comes.' Then, from a much-travelled craftsman whose 60 years of work have taken him to Germany, Holland, Portugal, Egypt, Spain and America, with many a tale to tell of working-class life and colonial oppression from his rich storehouse of experience, who claims that reading *L.M.* 'keeps an edge on' him in his retirement. Commenting on the illustrations in the fortnightly *People's China*, he says: 'My first impression: "but I have seen this before, where?" Of

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Notes of the Month

Labour, Mr. Bevan and Britain's Future

The need to find an entirely new path forward is presented to the British people and the British Labour Movement in the sharpest possible fashion.

Britain's problems can be solved only by a completely new programme and policy, which represents a decisive break with imperialism, the drive to war, and surrender to the United States, and ends once and for all the ownership of Britain's wealth by a tiny exploiting minority and establishes the real political and economic freedom of the people. *The British Road to Socialism.* (Adopted at the Easter Congress of the Communist Party.)

MAY DAY, 1952, renews the call for peace, for the international alliance and friendship of the working people of all countries, for working class emancipation and for a new socialist society. This imperishable clarion call of May Day, proclaimed and honoured by ever increasing millions in every country of the world over these six decades of extending social

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transformation, sounds with renewed appeal to the deepest longings of all who have to live in the present 'Atlantic' capitalist world of frenzied rearmament, privations and lowered standards in the service of death, hovering between the spectre of war and the spectre of a new slump, and sinking into an abyss of barbarous war crimes in the desperate endeavour to hold back the tide of human liberation. It sounds with all the greater strength in the new advancing world of socialism and popular democracy, where economic and political power is firmly in the hands of the working people, and where the resulting triumphs of peaceful construction are able to demonstrate, no longer in future aspiration, but in practical life experience, the alternative picture of rising standards and falling prices, of science and production in the service of life more abundant.

Britain's Crisis

Nowhere is the battle between the old and the new, between the aims of war and the aims of peace, more sharply presented than in Britain. The crisis of Britain's economic and political system is visible to all. After six years of a Labour Government with an absolute Parliamentary majority, Toryism is in the saddle. Monopoly capitalism is more strongly entrenched than ever ('since the war it is practically certain that monopoly has increased rather than diminished'—Labour Party pamphlet on *Monopoly*, published in September, 1951). The fall in real living standards is measurable even in the official figures. In the face of an unparalleled increase in productivity per worker, consumption is further restricted, and heavy additional burdens and sacrifices are demanded in the name of a desperate situation. Never was the outcome of six years of the rule of Social Democracy with an absolute Parliamentary majority more mercilessly exposed. Never was the contrast more striking with the continuous rise in living standards in the countries where communism leads the people and the great productive resources of the country have been taken out of the hands of the big capitalists and landlords. The choice between two paths inescapably confronts the working people of Britain.

Downward Path

Britain's economy in the hands of the present owning and ruling class is incapable of meeting the needs and demands of the people. All the frivolous talk of 'Socialist Britain' and the 'new Democ-

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ratic Socialist model' during the past six years was no more than the thin and flimsy veneer—as the present situation abundantly demonstrates—for the increasingly concentrated monopoly of the productive resources of the country in the hands of the big banks and trusts and combines closely integrated with the State, with steeply intensified exploitation of the workers and squeezing out and impoverishment of the middle sections. This ossified and decadent finance-capitalist economy is by its own admission incapable of carrying out the major tasks of construction and development which are universally recognised as indispensable, for which all the plans are scheduled and prepared, which are scientifically and technically completely possible, but which are continuously cut down and shelved under the present regime as impossible of achievement. In the face of food shortage it is incapable even of full cultivation of the land of Britain. In the face of desperate need for higher scientific and technical training it cuts down education. It cannot even provide the necessary electric power for production, and falls back on power-cuts. Steel production has gone down, when it has risen over all the rest of the world. Yet the immediately essential and neglected tasks of construction and development are infinitesimal in comparison with the gigantic new achievements in this sphere which are now being accomplished in the Soviet Union and People's Democracies, and on which the Press of this country dare not publish the facts.

Writing on the Wall

This regime of the oldest, mortally diseased and dying finance-capitalist monopoly, which is so sedulously fostered and plastered over with a thick coat of propaganda cosmetics by the alliance of the big business oligarchy and right wing labour bosses to give it a new face, is proving incapable of survival in modern world economy and world politics. It is weakening in its unequal combat before the advancing challenge of the still superior strength of the relatively newer American monopoly capitalism and its West German and Japanese satellites. The ancient reserves of imperialist fat from past conquests and overseas capital accumulation, on which it has been subsisting, together with dearly bought American subsidies, are proving inadequate and begin to approach exhaustion, as the chronic deficit on the balance of payments, the still dwindling gold and dollar reserves, and the sharp

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fall in 'invisible income' during the second half of last year indicate. The hold on the old empire possessions, despite all the alternation of manoeuvres and repression, falters; the Anglo-Iranian octopus has had to clear out of Iran; the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, from Malaya and India to Iran and Egypt and Africa, are on the march. They have assuredly no intention to 'keep the British lion as a pet'; even the American financiers begin to grudge the cost of keeping it as a mercenary.

Rake's Road to Ruin

In the desperate endeavour to maintain the old basis all the resources of this sick and impoverished regime are strained to turn out colossal multiplied armaments, maintain armies and garrisons all over the world, and conduct savage and costly colonial wars. For the sake of rearmament and war, Britain is mortgaged to the American financiers, who in return impose crippling restrictions on Britain's trade to prevent recovery and ceaselessly raise the figure of rearmament demanded. The outcome only strikes new blows at the already weakened economy and accelerates the madman's career along the road to ruin. However thinly the dwindling butter ration is spread in the shape of diminishing 'welfare social services' to make the poor pay for the poor (for the social service benefits are entirely paid for by the increased taxation of the lower incomes), the inescapable truth is ever more relentlessly demonstrated that this bankrupt regime of increasing misery and war, whether under a Tory Government or a Right Wing Labour Government, is progressively less capable of maintaining living standards or providing any hope of the future for the people. Its doom is written on the wall. But this doom will only become effective when the working people, throwing off the shackles of dead illusions and dead leadership, unite in their combined strength under progressive political leadership and with a conscious alternative programme to take their country into their own hands and build their own future in association with the advancing free peoples of the world. Until then the thumbscrew and the state of progressive deterioration, of new burdens and privations, of Austerity Cripps and Super-Austerity Butler, of wars and threats of war, will continue the historic task to grind to powder the conservative illusions of a dead past.

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Political Question Mark

This real situation of the Britain that is dying and the new Britain that is striving to come to birth is reflected, still dimly, still through a distorting mirror, in the present political situation. The thick crust of ancient forms, institutions, habits, prejudices and illusions, dating from the era of unchallenged imperialist supremacy and 'prosperity', of ingrained social conservatism, whether acting directly through the Tory Party or enthroned in the citadels of the old labour movement, lies heavy as a choking, suffocating overgrowth to ban and kill and strangle all that is new and living. But social conservatism can never permanently bar the road to historical change, though its delaying action may increase the violence and destructiveness of the subsequent explosion. The Britain of Elizabeth, Churchill and Attlee can no more escape its destiny to be relegated to a museum piece than the old Austro-Hungarian Empire of the Hapsburgs. Because Britain is the oldest capitalist country, which long enjoyed unchallenged world supremacy and monopoly, the assumptions and institutions inherited from that monopoly linger on into a changed world, and social conservatism is most deeply entrenched in Britain, and not least in the labour movement.

Breaking Through

Corresponding to its capitalist environment, which led the world a century ago, and then fell behind in the imperialist era, the traditional labour movement in Britain was in the vanguard of the world labour movement, a century ago, but then fell to the rear in the imperialist era, developing stage by stage a generation behind the rest of Europe. Obstinately and tenaciously its leadership resisted the ideas of socialism and the conception of a political labour movement during the last quarter of the 19th century, long after mass socialist parties had developed in the leading countries of Europe. All the political wiseacres of that era sagely laid down that socialism and a political labour movement might find a basis in the countries of Europe, but could never take root in the soil of Britain. But the political labour movement came, and the aim of socialism received formal recognition. Is that the end of the story? Of course not. As obstinately and tenaciously the present leadership believe themselves to represent the final culmination and resist to the death the

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necessary next stage of advance to Marxism-Leninism, to communism, long after the majorities of the leading working class parties of Europe have advanced to communism.

Exploded Illusion

The contemporary political wiseacres no less sagely declare that communism may find its majority basis in the working class of the countries of Europe, but will never take root in Britain or win the majority of the working class in Britain. And their obedient echoes, the pigmy wiseacres of the late Labour Government, even strut about and boast that 'they did it', that their earth-shaking achievements are the 'cause' of the relatively small numbers of the Communist Party in Britain—by which brilliant reasoning the Baldwin Tory Government of the inter-war years could have equally claimed that it was the 'cause' of the much smaller numbers of the Communist Party at that date, at a time when the majority of the French Socialist Party had already voted its transformation to the French Communist Party, leaving only a rump to masquerade as the 'French Socialist Party'. History will as relentlessly destroy the naive and ignorant illusions of these pundits as it has already done those of their predecessors.

Two Nations

The present initial stage of development reached is expressed in the precarious political balance and virtual deadlock between the two major parties which in the existing electoral system have come to dominate and practically monopolise electoral and Parliamentary representation to the exclusion of all third elements: the Tory Party, directly representing and run by the leaders of the financial oligarchy, while drawing in a vast satellite array of the middle and petty bourgeoisie and politically backward workers; and the Labour Party, based for its main membership and finance on the economic mass organisations of the working class in the class struggle, but at present excluding the militant left workers, and led by an alliance of representatives from the petty bourgeoisie (a few bigger bourgeois elements) and the reformist labour bureaucracy, and drawing in support from progressive sections of the petty bourgeoisie. Despite the confused and distorting mirror of this representation, which appears to present the confrontation of finance-capital and the four-fifths working class and employed majority of the nation as a division

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of the nation into two roughly equal halves, the underlying character of class confrontation and latent class struggle to which the British Parliamentary system has been brought is inescapable, recognised in practice by all political observers and electoral agents of all viewpoints, and is especially visible in the constituency electoral contests.

Precarious Equilibrium

Only the practical collaboration and veiled coalition of the top leadership on both sides makes this precarious balance for the moment workable to maintain the policies of imperialism and finance-capital. But this basis is inherently and ever more visibly unstable. As the crisis deepens, as the blows of rearmament and economy cuts fall unsparingly on the workers and those with lower incomes, as the fear of the drive to war extends, so the pressure from below stirs and rumbles and increases against the right wing leadership and its policy of collaboration, and universal national discontent begins to find expression against the subservience of both the Front Benches to American orders and to the American war maniacs. The right wing leadership is compelled to have resort to a complex machinery of bans, exclusions, prohibited relationships, discipline and threats of discipline, with violent fulminations against the industrial action of the workers, and cracking of the whip against dissident M.P.s. Standing Orders are reimposed. All this does not avail to prevent the growth of the ferment. New currents affect wide sections of the Parliamentary Party, and give rise to new alignments and public controversies among the top leadership which had been combined in the main period of the Labour Government. Despite all the distortion of representation above, despite all the blanketing and discipline, the pressure from below drives forward the development, compels new questioning and new challenges. Through all these complex and manifold forms the fist of the class struggle, of the economic and political struggle of the popular masses for their living needs and for peace, begins to break through the spurious harmony of class collaboration.

Towards What Goal?

With sombre alarm, the most far-seeing representative of finance-capital, Churchill, detected the future menace to his order revealed in the precarious equilibrium of the two major parties after the 1950 election:

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We should not survive by splitting into two nations; yet that is the road we are travelling now, and there is no sign of our reaching or even approaching journey's end.

Journey's end? It is still only journey's beginning. The fond hopes of the reactionary Tadpoles and Tapers of both party machines to reproduce the placid majestic alternation of the old two-party system of Gladstone and Disraeli in the era of Victorian stability are doomed to frustration in the era of the deepening general crisis of capitalism. The real political conflict today is no longer the amicable give-and-take of rival sections of the exploiting classes, united on the fundamental structure of society and against the exploited masses—however much the bantering concord and shadow-boxing of the right honourable gentlemen of the financial oligarchy and the right wing reformist bureaucracy might appear to create the illusion of the restoration of an antique comedy. The real political conflict today, whose pressure begins to burst through even the forms of Parliamentary deception designed to conceal it, is the basic conflict of classes, of exploited and exploiters, between whom there can be no lasting truce nor peace, but only, through whatever ordeals of struggle or reactionary violence, the final victory of the rising class, the working class, leading the overwhelming majority of the nation, and the complete irrevocable extinction of the economic and political power of finance-capital—that is, the victory of People's Democracy.

People's Democracy

People's Democracy is not yet the recognised aim of the British Labour Movement, nor even the conscious aim of many sincere socialists who desire the replacement of capitalism by socialism. Yet, in fact, this objective is only the concrete expression of the necessary long-term outcome of the aims of all those who seek the victory of a united labour movement, winning the majority of the nation in a common alliance for a permanent parliamentary majority, and completely dispossessing the big bankers, industrial magnates and landlords, and thereby in practice extinguishing the basis for any Tory Party or party of finance-capital. The only alternative, once the present political situation is thought to a conclusion, is the final and public repudiation of the aim of socialism as understood by all the pioneers and founders of the movement—and to this shameful outcome the right wing leadership by the remorseless logic of their policy have now reached.

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Hence the fight for the victory of the labour movement, for the defeat of Toryism, and for the aims of socialism is inseparably bound up with the defeat of the right wing policies of co-operation with Toryism and repudiation of socialism. The advancing strength of the fight of the united mass movement for these aims will in practice develop and merge, by the compelling necessities of class politics and class battles, into the fight for people's democracy, even though many of those who will eventually help to bring about that transformation may not yet consciously recognise that aim, because they have not yet learned it out of their own experience, but only heard of it through the caricature misrepresentations from the class enemy.

Music of the Future

Let us by all means frankly recognise that the question of these longer-term aims is still in the region of discussion of the future, since they do not arise directly from the present political situation. The deeply ingrained British tradition of empirical advance and contempt for theory (in other words, the preference to take the longest way round and avoid short cuts) is likely also to be demonstrated in the development to people's democracy, which may well begin to be realised in practice before it is recognised in theory. People's democracy will never be established in Britain on the basis of some doctrinaire blueprint, but will grow out of the living political development and struggle, for which the initial conditions are already beginning to be visible, and at first, in all probability, with a host of anomalies, imperfections and contradictions. At the present stage it is only necessary to insist that honest and sober discussion of these perspectives, free from the stupid anti-socialist yahoo quips of the Mail-Herald-Transport House type, has become essential for all sincere socialists and democrats who are concerned about Britain's political future and seek to draw in a responsible fashion the lessons from three Labour Governments.

Next Steps

The immediate first necessity, irrespective of differences on long-term perspectives, is inescapable and evident, and provides the ground of broadest common agreement for present action. It will be agreed by all serious and progressive sections of the labour movement that the paramount immediate necessity,

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arising directly from the present political situation, from the Tory attacks upon the workers and from the drive to war, is effective unity in action, irrespective of long-term political differences, for the twofold aim: first, to defeat the present attacks and protect the living standards of the people and press forward the fight for peace; and second, to bring down the Tory Government as rapidly as possible, and rally the support of the majority of the people at the next election on the basis of a positive programme which presents a concrete alternative to the Tory policy of misery and war (in place of an apologetic echo of Tory policy) and practical steps for improvement of conditions and for peace. Such a positive alternative programme would include the most elementary common demands agreed by all sections: for peace and the reduction of armaments; for the ending of the present overseas wars; for the restoration of Britain's freedom of action; for East-West trade and international co-operation; and on this foundation for the reversal of the Tory cuts, improvement of living standards and economic, social and cultural advance. It is to the problems of this next stage of advance of the entire labour movement, and to the formulation of proposals for such a common united programme, that the Communist Congress at Easter devoted its main attention, at the same time as presenting its long-term proposals for the future in the *British Road to Socialism*. It is in relation to these present pressing needs and tasks that every proposal from any representative or section of the labour movement needs to be considered and judged.

Crisis of Labour Policy

The present burning controversies over the future of labour policy are no accidental or transient phenomenon. The crisis of policy of the labour movement, following the outcome of the Third Labour Government and the domination of Toryism, is the heart of the present political situation in Britain. Its solution is the key to Britain's political future. The results of the County Council elections have shown the rapid revival of militancy and confidence from the electoral defeat of a few months back, to an extent which has aroused the amazed comments of the Government Press. There is no doubt that the united mass movement against the cuts, the extension of economic and political action by the workers, despite discouragement by the official leadership, played its decisive part in this revival. Toryism is hammering its blows upon the people; unemployment and short time extends;

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the burden of rearmament and the menace of war hangs over all. The people want a change; they have shown that they are ready to fight back. But where is the clear alternative programme and leadership offered to them on behalf of the labour movement? All is still at sixes and sevens. The official accredited leaders are conducting an internal discussion which is shrouded behind closed doors. An array of official sub-committees is appointed to evolve a 'policy', since it is discovered that there is 'no Labour policy' since the abandonment of the aims of socialism. The dominant right wing leadership echoes every major plank of the Tory platform (rearmament programme, American war alliance and bases in Britain, Nazi rearmament, wars in Malaya and Korea, bans on East-West trade, and consequent economy cuts in Britain). Their followers angrily demand an alternative programme. Bans and excommunications are fulminated against all who challenge the pro-Tory policy or support united action or peace. But their numbers grow. Beneath the still heavy and slow-moving surface of political expression on top, a storm is gathering in Britain.

Professor Cole's Dilemma

The visible, theoretical and practical bankruptcy of Western European Social Democracy in the present world situation is given vivid expression in the latest publication of one of its principal theoretical spokesmen, G. D. H. Cole, under the title *The Development of Socialism During the Past Fifty Years.* Cole, whose sincerity has always won him respect, and who has recently uttered sane and courageous words against the menace of the American war policy and on the necessity to resist it, has developed the habit during the past period of emerging from time to time from his retirement like some Nestor of the labour movement to pronounce his observations and admonitions, but is in danger of becoming its Hamlet by his permanent inability to reach a practical decision. He writes:

> The fire and the fervour, I feel, are dying out fast from the socialism of the West. . . . The problem confronting western socialism today is simply this—can it meet the challenge of Communism without accepting the philosophy of Americanism as a substitute for its lost ideals? I do not know the answer: I only know that I feel lonely and near despair in a world in which socialist values as I understand them are being remorselessly crushed out between the two immense grinding stones of Communist autocratic centralism and hysterical American worship of wealth.

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'Third Force' Blind Alley

Here is the melancholy end of the road of those who have sought to follow the imaginary 'third path' only to find it end in a cul-de-sac. Cole is conscious of the horror of American capitalist civilisation and its drive to atomic destruction; he longs for the goal of socialism in the abstract; but he shrinks from the conditions of its realisation in the harsh real world of struggle. The mythical 'third force' of the petty bourgeoisie finds itself 'remorselessly crushed out' between the upper and nether millstones of the class struggle. In place of realising that there is place for him and for all like him who hate capitalism and war to join in a common united movement, communists and non-communists alike, for the victory of these aims, he sinks back into passive helplessness. Why? Because he makes his starting point for his 'western socialism' not: How can the working class conquer capitalism? How can the peoples win freedom and peace? But instead: How to 'meet the challenge of Communism'. From that starting point, which is the echo of the outlook of the dying capitalist world, the conclusion inevitably follows: 'I do not know . . . I feel lonely and near despair'. Here in this voice of death is no leadership for the working class and the people.

Mr. Bevan's New Book

The Labour Party membership and wide sections of the British public, in search of a positive answer to the burning questions of today, will turn with more attention to the new book (*) of a more prominent and active representative of the Labour Party leadership, who occupies a key position at the present moment precisely because he has expressed in the recent period a measure of criticism of some of the policies of the dominant right wing leadership and is therefore looked upon by considerable numbers who demand a change of policy, especially in the constituency Labour Parties, as their spokesman and champion. Mr. Bevan shared in and upholds the policies of the Labour Government up to April, 1951, including the initial sponsorship of the £4,700 million rearmament programme which he advocated as justified and practicable in the House of Commons in January, 1951, but resigned over the health charges in Mr. Gaitskell's Budget in April. During the twelve months since then the ferment of the mass movement has found reflection in a continuous extension in the area of his criticism. While still upholding the general lines

* In Place of Fear, by Aneurin Bevan. Heinemann. 10s. 6d. (paper, 6s.)

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of the Atlantic Pact, the wars in Malaya and Korea and extreme anti-Soviet and anti-Communist hostility, he has criticised the extent of the rearmament programme, the aggressive character of American policy especially in the Far East, British subservience to American policy, and the Conservative use of the arms programme (in his words in parliament on March 27) an 'excuse to dismantle the welfare state'. He has also criticised the Morrison line of 'consolidation' as the future objective of labour policy, and called for the extension of public ownership, and in his recent meeting with 3,000 Sheffield engineers on April 6 (with the Communist President of the Sheffield District Committee of the A.E.U. on the platform) has called for an active offensive to bring about the resignation of the Tory Government by the autumn and the return of a Labour Government which would carry out a new policy and ensure peace. In his book he endeavours to combine some of these lines of criticism and advocacy with the general principles and outlook of Social Democracy and Anti-Communism.

Unity and Criticism

The battle against the pro-Tory, pro-American and pro-war policies of the dominant right wing leadership in the Labour Party will require the broadest unity of all sections who desire an alternative immediate programme, irrespective of differences on ultimate political issues. To the extent that any group of labour representatives associated with Mr. Bevan conduct any degree of fight, however limited, against these policies and for an alternative policy in the interests of the working people and peace, they may be sure of the fullest practical support in that fight from all sections who are concerned for the future of the labour movement, including from those who may by no means share the general philosophical outlook of Mr. Bevan. In this concrete political situation it would be irrelevant to spend time to criticise this book at length on the general ultimate questions of social democracy and Marxism or communism, on which he is so eager to trail his coat. But it is essential to pose the question: Does this book, constituting the political pronouncement of Mr. Bevan's current position, present any clear alternative programme for all those sections in the Labour Party who are seeking an alternative programme? Does it offer a positive answer on the burning questions of the day or run away from

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them in a sea of verbiage and generalisations? Does his parade of philosophical principles help to build up the unity of the left, of all fighters for peace and socialism, or to disrupt their ranks? Does his support of Tito and ceaseless slander and vilification of the Socialist Soviet Union hinder or assist the imperialist war camp? Does his philosophy play into the hands of the right wing leadership on every vital principle, even alongside sporadic and often ambiguously phrased concessions to current mass demands, in such a way as to draw any advancing sections who may look to his leadership for a guide, back to the fold of right wing policy? These are legitimate questions which require to be frankly discussed, alongside the practical common front of all who are seeking to fight for a progressive alternative programme.

Press Reception

Mr. Bevan's book has received in the official Press ('the most prostituted in the world, and mostly owned by millionaires', in his phrase) a lavish reception on a scale normally accorded only to Royal Weddings or to Mr. Winston Churchill's War Memoirs. This is not entirely a question of the internal merits of the book. It is a recognition of its political significance, and of the position held by its author, in relation to the present advancing challenge of the left and mass discontent, and the weakening hold of the dominant right wing leadership represented by Mr. Attlee, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Gaitskell or Mr. Shinwell, not to mention Mr. Deakin or Mr. Tewson. All these latter would be indeed weak reeds to hold back the masses in a storm. The millionaire press, despite its public air of foolishness and ineptitude, is often a shrewd judge in these matters. *There is no instance in the entire record of the British capitalist press to have given wide publicity to any book regarded by them as dangerous to the interests they serve.* But there are plenty of instances of the method, especially in periods of popular discontent, of fastening on some prominent public figure, who has shown an aptitude and flair for catching the ear of the masses, even with the most 'outrageous' statements, alongside a less conspicuous, but sufficiently demonstrated, essential 'soundness' and orthodoxy for the maintenance and protection of the basic institutions of the British capitalist-imperialist state, to be presented with simultaneous denunciation, execration and limelit publicity as the 'Prince Rupert of the Left' and the 'extremist menace'.

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Lessons of History

It is only necessary to recall the treatment of Lloyd George before the war or MacDonald during and immediately after the war. MacDonald was the 'Traitor' to be hounded 'to the Tower', the incarnation of 'the Red menace'; and all the hopes and aspirations of the insurgent millions at the end of the war were steered towards him. The left in the Parliamentary Labour Party voted him into the leadership to replace Clynes, and believed they had won a victory for a left policy. The outcome undeceived them. This is not to say that past analogies should lead to mechanical conclusions for the future. But the notorious technique of the British ruling class ('the cleverest, most flexible from the point of view of their class interests, from the point of view of maintaining their class power' of all the old ruling classes, in Stalin's words) requires to be recognised. The elastic British Constitution long ago established the official post of Her Majesty's Leader of the Opposition. It might be said that the still more elastic unofficial British Constitution requires the unofficial post of Her Majesty's Leader of the Rebels.

A Sigh of Relief

Nor is it possible to fail to note in the contents of the extensive press comments, especially in the Conservative and right wing Labour press, an underlying note of satisfaction at the essential harmlessness of the book from the standpoint of representing any real basic challenge to their interests.

> A cure for insomnia (*Daily Mail*).
>
> Revolutionaries should not make their readers yawn (*Daily Telegraph*).
>
> Essentially moderate . . . many people mistake him for an extremist . . . The reader who looks for a specific programme for our next Labour Government in these pages will be disappointed. . . . It adds up to a mood rather than to a policy (John Strachey in the *Daily Herald*).
>
> Apart from some peevish comments on minor aspects of policy the most orthodox of right wing members of the Labour Party would find little to cavil at. . . .
>
> Such placid sentiments . . . are hardly calculated to excite the faithful. Mr. Bevan may evoke condemnation, not for being too revolutionary, but for not being revolutionary enough.
>
> Neither decisive nor conclusive . . . a tangle (Emanuel Shinwell in the *Daily Express*).

All this hardly suggests a very powerful challenge to official policy. On behalf of the liberal-socialist centre Mr. Kingsley Martin ingenuously reveals the calculation:

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If Labour cannot use Nye Bevan's services, the mass leaders who succeed him will not share his love for Parliament nor his anxiety to maintain the continuity of our institutions. (*New Statesman and Nation*, April 5.)

Apparently, Mr. Martin recommends Mr. Bevan as a kind of insurance policy against revolution.

Memories of MacDonald

Will the Labour Party rank and file member or trade unionist find here a concrete fighting programme to enlist his support? He will search in vain in the labyrinthine maze of rambling chapters on 'Social Tensions', 'The Invasion of Doubt', or 'Modern Man and Modern Society'. But he will find plenty like this to answer his questions:

> The student of politics must therefore seek neither universality nor immortality for his ideas and for the institutions through which he hopes to express them. What he must seek is integrity and vitality. His Holy Grail is the living truth, knowing that being alive the truth must change. . . . (p. 13).
>
> Democratic socialism is a child of modern society and so of relativist philosophy. It seeks the truth in any given situation, knowing all the time that if this be pushed too far it falls into error. It struggles against the evils that flow from private property, yet realises that all forms of private property are not necessarily evil. (p. 170).

Where have we heard all this before somewhere? Yes, in the earlier (and later) MacDonald. Substitute psychology for biology, and the echo becomes complete. This is not a mere question of style. The author can express himself with the most concrete sharpness, conciseness and pungency when he chooses. Style here is politics, as with MacDonald. The rambling mystic complexity conceals evasion. The mystic 'third force' hates to answer concrete questions.

Old Wine in New Bottles

If it is urged in reply that the aim of the book is to present a general statement of political philosophy ('democratic socialism') rather than a concrete political pronouncement, the resulting question cuts still deeper. Wherein does this political philosophy of 'democratic socialism' so industriously advocated in this book differ in any essential from the political philosophy long ago elaborated by Ramsay MacDonald? Why, then, should it be expected to yield different results? Social Democracy, having fallen into evil odour by its record, may be rebaptised 'Democratic Socialism': but the change of label does not change the

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content. Long ago MacDonald wrote a book on 'Parliament and Revolution'; and Mr. Bevan appears to repeat its arguments with the fervour of a new revelation—as if Marxists were against the maximum use of parliament, or as if British imperialism were not a direct dictatorship in respect of the majority of its subjects.

Ancient Lights

In this respect the general ideas of the book reveal a curiously archaic flavour, as if no new impressions had been absorbed since boyhood. Its pages are littered with the dead horses whose decaying carcases he laboriously flogs. 'Marxism' means for him De Leon and Noah Ablett and the hoary confusions of syndicalist reformism. Marxism-Leninism is to him a closed book. He launches out with all the fervour of a crusader against 'laissez-faire' and 'competitive capitalism' with no sign of awareness that the dominant character of modern capitalism has long become that of monopoly capitalism, and that the function of the Third Labour Government was precisely to assist the further concentration of monopoly capitalism and its integration with the State, at the expense of the workers and the colonial peoples.

Imperialism and 'Democratic Socialism'

The most serious practical consequences from this are seen in the apparent complete blindness to the character of modern imperialism (which he seems to regard merely as a term of abuse appropriate for the Soviet Union) and its integral connection with the foundations of British economic structure and 'democratic' institutions on the basis of colonial domination and spoliation. Engels once wrote in a pregnant sentence that 'the so-called freedom of English citizens is based on the suppression of the colonies'. Bevan could have reached a glimpse of this when he says that 'freedom is the by-product of economic surplus' (p. 39), but he does not follow up the analysis of the 'economic surplus'. Blissfully reposing his 'democratic' pretensions on a foundation of colonial slavery and spoliation, he actually repeats (p. 125) the familiar boast of Britain's 'recovery' in 1950 as a triumph of 'democratic socialist' achievement, without any sign of awareness that the proudly proclaimed 'solution' of the dollar deficit and achievement of a dollar surplus of the sterling area in 1950 in reality concealed the continuance of the United Kingdom

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dollar deficit and was based entirely on the enlarged dollar surplus of the dependent colonial territories, that is, on intensified colonial exploitation. A remarkable 'socialist' triumph.

Reverse of the Medal

The heart of the problem lies here; for the policies of imperialism lead to the policies of war and to the consequent burdens and impoverishment also for the home population (by no means only on the '*excuse*' of rearmament). Mr. Bevan's vehement championship of 'democratic socialism' and 'aid to the backward dependent peoples' conceals the ugly truth behind the façade that it was precisely the extreme *intensification* of colonial exploitation during the years of Labour's rule since the war (partially reflected in the doubling of the sterling balances of the dependent overseas territories from £446 million at the end of 1945 to £964 million at the end of 1951, or an increase of £518 million, representing goods extracted without any show of current return) that was the pivot of the Labour Government's economic 'recovery' programme. From this imperialist foundation of the 'democratic socialist' myth follows the practical approval of the barbarous war in Malaya as necessary for Britain's balance of payments; he demands in Parliament more troops in Egypt; he declares (p. 127) that 'we' are in Hong Kong 'by right of Treaty' (i.e., the glorious 'right' of the Opium Wars). It is this imperialist basis which is the common underlying basis of the Atlantic Pact powers and of all the beautiful talk of 'Western civilisation' and 'Western democratic socialism'. And it is this reality of the actual intensified plunder of the colonial peoples which makes a bitter mockery of all the grandiose projects of 'world aid' by British and American imperialism to 'combat the poverty of the under-developed countries'—but never to get off their backs and stop plundering them.

In Place of —— ?

Mr. Bevan has entitled his book 'In Place of Fear'. He does not at the outset define what it is of which he is seeking to overcome the fear. But his further argument makes his meaning clear. It is Fear of Communism. He argues that American strategy is so obsessed by the fear of communism as to fall into hopeless blunders by over-estimating Soviet strength (he is very confident that the Soviet Union would be defeated in a war—so

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was Hitler), misusing its resources and placing such crippling burdens of rearmament upon the capitalist world as to result in playing into the hands of communism. He argues that his is a better strategy to defeat communism. But the common ground with imperialism, including with American imperialism, remains to defeat communism. The tactics differ. To this extent his starting point is the same as that of Professor Cole, who defined the task of 'Western Socialism' to 'meet the challenge of Communism'. Bevan begins where Cole left off. We saw where Cole ended—in 'despair'. This is no road to the victory of the working class or of socialism. The enemy is capitalism. The aim is socialism. In this common battle all who desire this aim, communists and non-communists alike, the working class and their allies, can and must unite. There is no other road to victory. The enemy is war. The aim is peace. In this common struggle all the peoples of the world must unite, communists and non-communists alike, and allow no bans and exclusions to stand in the path. Such is the road forward for the true conquest of fear—the overcoming once and for all of the real fears that haunt the masses of ordinary people in Britain today, the fear of war, the fear of unemployment, the fear of poverty, the fear of the future—by the united strength of the working people and by the common victory which they can and will achieve for the aims of emancipation and of peace.

April 15, 1952. R.P.D.

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THE PRESS AND GERM WARFARE

D. N. PRITT, Q.C.

THE unscrupulous and dangerous methods of the national Press in the reporting or non-reporting of political news has been remarkably illustrated in connection with germ (or 'bacteriological') warfare.

It will be remembered that ever since February last the Chinese and North Koreans have been accusing the American air forces of dropping infected germs from aircraft into both Korea and Manchuria, with a view to spreading epidemics indiscriminately among the civilian populations far behind the lines (and, in the case of China, in a country not even at war). The Americans have throughout flatly denied the accusations, as they have denied many other charges of which they have been later proved guilty, and even—at times—admitted their guilt.

The ordinary non-political observer at this distance could not feel sure which side was telling the truth. He could only await confirmation, preferably from neutrals; and, if very naive, he could hope that the British Press would give him the confirmation when it came.

It came on the 19th March, in the form of a telegram from Phyong Yang, the capital of North Korea. The telegram was signed by all the eight members of a Commission of jurists who had been sent out some time before by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers to investigate the evidence of atrocities in North Korea generally. The chairman of the Commission was Professor Brandweiner, a well-known Austrian Catholic Professor of Canon Law and International Law, who was not even a Socialist. Four other members, one each from Italy, France, Belgium and Brazil, were non-Communist. The English member was a Communist lawyer of distinction and integrity; he had been reluctant to accept, on the ground that the Press in its modern degeneracy discounts evidence, however strong, if a Communist is connected with it (in spite of the regular disquieting experience of modern politics that, wherever any policy is seen to be ruinous, it may be noticed that the Communists condemned it as ruinous months or even years before). Invitations were extended to a Labour peer, a Labour M.P., and a Labour Q.C.,

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before the Communist was finally asked to go. The two remaining members of the Commission were a Polish judge and a Chinese lawyer. Thus, six out of eight members came from this side of the 'curtain', and at least five of them were non-Communist.

What did the eight authors of the telegram say? They said that they had obtained evidence, which was corroborated, to the following effect:—

> That certain flies and other insects had been found in many districts of Korea, which were of a character hitherto unknown in Korea;
>
> That the low temperatures in which they were found, plus the type of soil in which they were found, plus the fact that aircraft had been circling in the districts in question, plus the finding of the remains of containers, all went to indicate that the insects in question had been deposited in groups or clusters from the air;
>
> That many of these insects were found by experts to be infected with cholera, typhus, plague and other diseases;
>
> That outbreaks of cholera and plague occurred within a few days of the finding of these insects, and only in the immediate neighbourhood of the places where the insects had been deposited; and finally,
>
> That the eight lawyers were horrified beyond measure at the facts, but regarded them as indisputable.

There were in this telegram some seven sound reasons for believing that the accusations against the Americans were proved. Was that convincing? Well, any lawyer would agree that it made a strong *prima facie* case. Was it 'news'? Well, any journalist would say that a similar report of something the North Koreans were doing to the Americans would have appeared on the front pages of all our 'national' newspapers, with big headlines.

The telegram was immediately circulated to the whole British Press. How did it deal with it? The *Daily Worker* reported it fully and properly. *The Times* went through manoeuvres which deserve detailed description. Other daily papers suppressed it absolutely, thus depriving their millions of readers of any opportunity to know and judge the facts. This sort of conduct is an utter degradation of common decency and of the 'sacredness of facts'; it would be unbelievable if we were not actually accustomed to it by our everyday experience in such matters.

The Times is more subtle, and has still some conscience and some tradition. What it did might have been condemned as outrageous 50 years ago; but today it shines out like a good deed in a naughty world. On the 20th March, the day after it had been given the text of the telegram, it published a leading article on

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'Germ Warfare', ridiculing the accusations and canvassing various possible motives or reasons for the Chinese and Russians making them. It suggested that they were perhaps made just to fan hatred of the Americans—surely a work of supererogation for anyone within a thousand miles of the Korean murderfields; that they were an effort to divide the allies—again something which could safely be left to the allies; that the Chinese, blaming the epidemics on to the war and the war on to the Americans, had thus convinced themselves that the Americans had dropped infected insects; that the whole thing is a preparation for trying on capital charges any American airmen who are forced down—for which surely a tragic superabundance of material already exists; and finally that the whole thing is a scheme to discourage Americans from flying near the Korean-Chinese frontier.

The Times, without of course making any reference to the cogent additional evidence of the truth of the accusations, which this telegram from seven neutral lawyers had brought, unhesitatingly condemned the accusations as false! Why? Because, wrote *The Times,*

> the deliberate spreading of disease is so abhorrent to the Western mind that no one in the West believes for a moment that the Americans, or any other people of the United Nations, have ever considered using so vile a method of warfare.

This gem calls for study. The 'Western mind', indeed! This conception that 'Western' minds are in some way purer than others—in truth an essentially Fascist conception—is unworthy of *The Times;* but it is, on the facts, particularly inappropriate here. Where is the evidence of superior morality in the Western initiators of the many forms of indiscriminate mass slaughter of civilians, the atom bomb, the mass bombings of towns, the wholesale destruction of Korean villages and their inhabitants reported in *Cry Korea* by a war correspondent whom not even an Unamerican Committee would call Communist, and the use of napalm? (Contrast these Western saints for a moment with the 'Eastern barbarians' in the U.S.S.R., who have been campaigning ever since 1922 against indiscriminate warfare against civilians, and have never used it themselves.)

Then, have the Americans never 'considered using so vile a method of warfare'? If they had not, it would be the only one they hadn't. But in truth, *The Times* seems to forget not only that the U.S. Government refused to ratify the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibiting bacteriological warfare, but also that President

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Truman withdrew the Treaty from consideration by the Senate in 1946, thereby making ratification impossible. It forgets, too, the Americans' open boasts of their experiments in germ warfare, carried on at Camp Detrick, Maryland, and that as long ago as March, 1949, they announced that they had 'an active programme' for biological warfare *only part of which covered defensive measures*—i.e., that they were contemplating positive offensive germ warfare. And the British Government, too, has admitted that it is experimenting in the same field. All that we can gain from these observations of *The Times*—apart from a wry smile—is that it has at any rate estopped itself from hereafter taking the conventional line that germ warfare is no worse than other methods of war, and that it does not much matter whether one uses shells, torpedoes, napalm, atom bombs, germs, or anything else.

The Times must maintain its stand against germ warfare; and this may yet be valuable. *The Times* then remained silent until the 24th March, when it published a report from New York, repeating a broadcast from Peking that a 'Commission of Communist lawyers' had returned from North Korea with evidence supporting charges of American germ warfare. This rather belated and roundabout report quoted portions of the telegram, but it gave no hint (save for the words 'the chairman, whose name was given as Brandweiner'), of the international composition of the Commission or of its non-Communist and 'Western' majority. On the 27th March, *The Times* improved the position a little by printing a letter from myself, stating the missing facts.

So much for our daily press. As for the Sunday newspapers of the 23rd March, they had, no doubt, the excuse that the report was 'old', although it had scarcely been 'news'. They all suppressed it; but the *Observer* went one better, or worse. It printed a cheap sneer on the English member of the Commission; a sneer at the Secretary General of the Association, a distinguished French lawyer, because in the highest traditions of his profession he 'has regularly appeared in Communist cases' (and a feeble sneer, too, at me, based on my telephone number). But it gave *no clue whatever* to what the telegram had said, although I had written to it a day or two before, supplying it with a further copy of the telegram, and urging it to publish it. One begins to understand why Lord Astor was so anxious to establish a trust of shares in the Observer Ltd. for the maintenance of the highest standards of journalism.

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FROM AN ORIGINAL LI

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:UT BY CHITTAPRASAD

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That is the end of the reporting by the British Press of that item of information; but the Commission had meanwhile been asked by the Association in Europe to go to North-East China to report on similar accusations in respect of that area. They did so, and on Saturday, the 29th March, they sent a telegram from Shenyang, signed by the same eight members, reporting the following facts:—

That they had examined 10 cases out of the many alleged to have occurred in North-East China since the 29th February;

That the circumstances were in most cases similar to those they had examined in Korea;

That in particular they had noticed the unusual nature of the insects, their close grouping, and the extremely cold temperatures in which they were found alive on snow and ice;

That flies, mosquitoes, fleas and feathers were found to be carrying bacteria or to be infected with virus;

That fragments of a special container had been found;

That in spite of the most stringent anti-epidemic precautions, a fatal disease of a type of encephalitis, hitherto unknown in China, had appeared; and that expert examination had revealed that this disease was identical with the effects of the virus carried by certain artificially infected mosquitoes found in the area where the fatal cases had occurred;

That the presence of American planes in the neighbourhood where the insects were found had been established; and finally,

That the extension of these criminal acts to the soil of a country which is not at war is an act of aggression by the U.S.A. which may have most grave consequences for the peace of the world if it is not now exposed and stopped.

This telegram—even more cogent and horrifying than the first—was communicated to the whole British Press on Saturday, the 29th March, in time for the Sunday and the Monday papers. What did they do to save the peace of the world by exposing and stopping this aggression, or even to let British public opinion be informed of it?

The answer is, of course, that apart from the *Daily Worker*, they did practically nothing. On March 31 the *Daily Herald* printed the larger part of the Shenyang telegram. Every other newspaper, including *The Times*, ignored it wholly. (*The Times* did indeed print in early April four further letters on the subject, but none of these letters disclosed any evidence as to the use of germ warfare.)

That is the state of affairs, at the time of going to press, in relation to the conduct, misconduct, or non-conduct of the Press in the face of the very striking evidence given above. But the wider topic of American germ warfare as a whole is of course growing

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ever more important, and is likely to develop rapidly, with practically all the denials printed and practically all the evidence suppressed. How long will it be possible for the troglodytes to continue assuring us that the kindly and humane Christians of Washington and Wall Street would stop short at germ warfare? And how long will it take them to see how oddly all that fits in with the official announcements that the kindly and humane Christians of Whitehall and Kuala Lumpur are spraying chemicals from the air in Malaya in order to destroy food crops and thus to starve to death both those who are and those who are not guilty of fighting for their own freedom and independence?

GERMANY AND PEACE

QUAESTOR

DURING the last two months a series of decisive steps by the Soviet Union have shown the practical way of salvation to the peoples alarmed at the growing economic ruin as armaments pile up, and at the continuing peril of a third world war. The first was the Soviet Note of March 10 on a peace treaty with Germany (together with the subsequent Note of April 9). The second was Stalin's reply, published on April 2, to questions on international relations put to him by a group of editors of American provincial newspapers. The third was the offer of a far-reaching expansion of world trade, made by Michael Nesterov, president of the Soviet Union Chamber of Commerce, at the International Economic Conference in Moscow on April 5.

These three initiatives have been denounced in Britain and America as parts of a 'peace offensive'. The very idea of peace is indeed offensive to the millionaires making profits out of armaments, to the politicians who do their bidding and to the prostitute newspaper owners and editors who sell their 'free and independent press' to trumpet the propaganda of the warmongers. But a Soviet 'peace offensive' has been going on since 1917—in the innumerable offers of peaceful economic collaboration with capitalist states, in the repeated proposals of a peace bloc which would have prevented the second world war, in Stalin's frequent declarations since 1945 of Soviet desire for peaceful arrangements with the United States and Great Britain. A Socialist people needs peace to get on with its work. This is the spirit that runs right through the new Soviet proposals: and its very opposite

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animates the replies coming from the ruling classes of America and Britain.

The Note of March 10 took account of the rising wave of opposition to rearmament in Western Germany, the passionate desire of the German people for national unity and restoration of their sovereignty, and the accelerated American drive for the formation of a West German army and air force under Nazi and neo-Nazi leadership—stronger than that which attacked France, Belgium and Holland in 1940—with the right to conduct atomic, chemical and germ war 'research'. The Soviet Note declared that it was essential to prevent the revival of German militarism, which was being encouraged at present; and it proposed the following main points of a Peace Treaty, to be framed jointly with an all-German Government.

1. Establishment of Germany as a single State, thus giving it 'the opportunity of developing as an independent, democratic, peace-loving State'. This opportunity would be backed by the securing of democratic rights for all Germans: the free functioning of democratic parties and organisations; the prohibition of organisations 'hostile to democracy and the cause of preserving peace'; and the granting of civil and political rights to former members of the army and former Nazis (apart from convicted criminals), enabling them to participate 'in the building of a peace-loving, democratic Germany'.

The desperate efforts of the capitalist press to cast a doubt on these proposals reveals the lengths to which the aggressors will go in thwarting democracy in Germany. The first and general line of attack—reflected in the Allied reply sent on March 25—was to suggest that free elections would not be permitted in Eastern Germany: when it is perfectly well known that in September, 1951, the German Democratic Republic proposed to the Bonn authorities joint arrangements for a democratic electoral law applying to all Germany (its Parliament adopted a draft in January, 1952), with elections to follow. Suppressing these facts, the press then demanded the admission of the United Nations commission of inquiry to the Democratic Republic—knowing that this had already been refused. But lest this piece of sabotage should not work, the *Economist* was already insisting on March 22 (not without information from the Foreign Office) that the Allied occupation forces should not be withdrawn 'until they see what sort of new Germany emerges': lest there might not,

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it wrote, 'be a majority for Dr. Adenauer's policy' (of national betrayal to America). We return to this crucial point below.

2. Germany would have her own national armed forces 'necessary for the country's defence', and could produce the necessary supplies for them. This is no novelty from the Soviet Union, no 'somersault', as the *Manchester Guardian* proclaimed on March 25, since in November, 1942, Stalin already pointed out that 'it is not our aim to destroy all organised military force in Germany, for every literate person will understand that it is not only impossible with regard to Germany, as it is in regard to Russia, but is also inexpedient from the point of view of the future'.

The real somersault is performed by those who have been loudly proclaiming their intention of forcing a 12-division army on the unwilling West Germans, officered by the old militarist caste which has been preserved intact in Western Germany—and now (like Eden in his April 1 broadcast) are shedding crocodile tears over the poor Germans who 'do not want a national army' or 'the revival of *old forms* of German nationalism and militarism'. New forms—like the impudently militarist and neo-fascist bodies openly working in West Germany—are, of course, all right, one must suppose. Yet, as the Paris *Monde*, that eminently conservative organ, remarked on March 20, the chiefs of the proposed Western divisions 'will be the chiefs of the old Hitlerite Wehrmacht'. What is really bothering the Americans is that, with the democratic forces strongly entrenched in eastern Germany and powerful (albeit presently held down) in western Germany, there would be a real chance of the militarists being checkmated in a united Germany pledged to be peaceable and democratic. As the *Economist* blurts out (March 22), eastern Germany 'would be a tough morsel' and the conscripted ex-Service men of the west would be confronted with 'indoctrinated' young men in the east.

3. All armed forces of the occupying Powers must be withdrawn, and their bases abolished, within one year of the entry into force of the Peace Treaty; and Germany undertakes 'not to enter into any coalitions or military alliances directed against any Power which participated with its armed forces in the war against Germany'. This clause, which would not deny to the German people 'the opportunity of peaceful co-operation with other nations', was included in the Peace Treaties already signed five years ago with the countries which fought on the German side between 1939 and 1945.

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But it is this principle which strikes at the root of American domination in Europe, and has therefore aroused the bitterest hostility of the American and British Governments. Already on March 20 the *Monde* had declared, 'It is impossible to take up the position that we reply to the Russians, "We don't accept the rebirth of German military power unless she is in our camp".'. But that is precisely the attitude taken. 'Western integration should precede any revival of German nationalism', wrote the *Economist* two days later. The all-German government should be free (said the British government in its reply of March 26) 'to enter into associations compatible with the principles and purposes of the United Nations' (as interpreted, naturally, by Washington and London)—particularly the 'purely defensive European Community' from which the U.S.S.R. was excluded. The United States, declared the American Secretary of State next day, will not be 'deflected' from its aim of forming such a 'community in Europe', i.e. an anti-Soviet military bloc, in which Germany 'must be allowed to play its part'—this although overwhelming opinion in Western Germany *outside* Adenauer's tame Parliament is that the people don't want to play any such part, as has been perfectly clear for a long time. Even the rabid *Economist,* in the issue previously quoted, ruefully admitted that the friends of 'the West' (i.e. of American imperialism) in Western Germany 'are still, it is true, a minority', and in all-German elections 'there might well not be a majority for Dr. Adenauer's policy of integration with Western Europe'. So much the worse for the majority, say the Americans and their British mouthpieces.

4 . 'The territory of Germany is defined by the frontiers established by the decisions of the Potsdam Conference of the Great Powers.' These decisions (i) transferred to the U.S.S.R. the area of East Prussia around Koenigsberg (now Kaliningrad); (ii) recognised that 'the former German territories' east of the rivers Oder and Western Neisse 'shall be under the administration of the Polish State' pending the final determination of Poland's western frontier, and laid down that the 'final delimitation' of this frontier should await the peace settlement.

What was the basis of this transfer of territories inhabited by Slav tribes for hundreds of years—tribes gradually conquered by the West-German Emperors in feudal times (1136-1492), and then ferociously and systematically exterminated or Germanised? It was the frightful destruction inflicted on the Polish people by

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even greater barbarians—the Nazi armies—in 1939 to 1945. Six million Poles were murdered (3,200,000 of them Jews)—22 per cent of the entire population—and property to the value of $3,500 millions was destroyed. The transfer of territories was but a small atonement for these atrocities. And the Potsdam Conference recognised the justice of this, by providing for 'the transfer to Germany of German population, or elements thereof, remaining in Poland'. This was further worked out by the Allied Control Council for Germany in a special decision on November 20, 1945, which did not hesitate to speak of the Recovered Territories, from which 3½ million Germans were to be transferred, as 'Poland'. Could anyone really suppose that the immense work of resettling these millions of Germans, and of settling nearly 4 million Poles, with vast rebuilding schemes to the value of billions of dollars, was carried out only as a temporary measure?

Why then the reference to 'final delimitation' of the frontier in the peace settlement? Because the Potsdam Conference by its very nature could not *formally* do what only a peace treaty between Germany and her former enemies could do—draw up an international act recognising the new frontier. But the use of the word 'delimitation' was deliberate: it is the term recognised in international documents (for example, in a ruling of the Permanent Court of International Justice in December, 1923, on a disputed frontier) for minor modifications in detail, excluding any complete or far-reaching abandonment of the frontier involved.

Yet all of this was blandly ignored in the comments on the Soviet Note. The *Economist*, for example—notorious for its campaign of support for the dear victimised Germans in 1945, without a single word of sympathy for the millions of their victims in the U.S.S.R. and Poland—began prating about the 'perversion of justice' of the frontier line. And the British reply to the Soviet Note tried to call the whole settlement into question, by the remark that 'in fact no definitive German frontiers were laid down by the Potsdam decisions'—as though they could be technically 'definitive' in any case.

The real purpose was, of course, not to raise points of legal technique but to give the German Nazis and hidden Nazis the 'all clear' to preach a war of revenge against Poland, Czechoslovakia and the U.S.S.R. And this they began doing with enthusiasm. Adenauer on March 16 said that 'the unity of Western Germany with the Bolshevik East, or co-operation with them, was impossible': German aims were 'the reuniting of Germany and finally

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the establishment of a new order in Eastern Europe', through 'the settlement of the Oder-Neisse frontier', and the 'clarification' of relations with 'Poland and the other Soviet satellite States'. On March 23 the official bulletin of Adenauer's Government announced that 'the time is past' when the Oder-Neisse line could be 'forced on a defeated nation'. A day or two later Professor Hallstein, Adenauer's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, declared in a lecture in Washington that it was necessary to 'integrate the whole of Europe up to the Urals'—and Adenauer on April 3 defended this too frank warrior against the demand for his dismissal. Well he might, since Attlee in his Philadelphia lecture on March 31 had already expressed the hope that the peoples of central and eastern Europe would be rescued from 'the Soviet Empire' and 'regain the freedom which they had lost'—the freedom, that is, to be ruled by native capitalists and landlords as a source of profits for American and British investors and as a dumping-ground for German trade. *The Times,* on April 7, went one better, by suggesting that it was merely 'tactless' of Hallstein to talk as he did, and that for the moment it only makes matters worse 'to suggest that they can be liberated by force'.

Thus the Soviet Note, with its plain and businesslike proposals for a settlement of the all-important question of Germany, had the effect of bringing out into the open the real enemies of peace and hypocritical promoters of a new world war, in which German conscripts would be America's mercenary 'shock troops'. No wonder the German Social Democratic Party executive, on April 9, came out into open opposition to the whole 'Western system of treaties and defence' being engineered by Adenauer—to the great embarrassment of the British Tory press and the *Daily Herald,* which did not mention the subject next day.

No less revealing was the reception of the second important document published by the Soviet Government—Stalin's replies to the American editors. He said that (i) a third world war was not 'nearer at the present time than two or three years ago'; (ii) a meeting between the heads of Great Powers 'possibly would be beneficial'; (iii) he considered 'the present time suitable for the unification of Germany'; and (iv) peaceful co-existence of capitalism and Communism is fully possible 'given a mutual desire to co-operate, a readiness to perform obligations which have been assumed, observance of the principle of equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States'.

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The reception of this timely statement by the Americans and the American Party in Britain showed once more that their policy is 'Hatred and war—at any price'. Stalin's statement 'was of no particular significance', said Dean Acheson on April 2. Stalin 'says nothing that is new or significant', wrote Mr. Ewer in the *Daily Herald* the same day. 'Easy generalisations' was the contemptuous comment of *The Times* of April 4. As for Churchill, who was not above playing on the people's desire for a Big Three meeting during his election campaigns in 1950 and 1951, he once again on April 8 masked a blank refusal with a double-faced phrase: 'If the circumstances and the situation were favourable.'

Thus, once more, the Soviet Union offers conversations, the aggressor bloc of governments rejects them.

The third Soviet step to peace was the series of practical proposals in the sphere of world trade. Michael Nesterov, pointing out that Soviet foreign trade was now thrice its pre-war level, made concrete proposals for doubling (as compared with 1948) the trade turnover with capitalist countries in the next two or three years, expanding it still further on a long-term programme, and specifying the different types of trade with different countries (including Britain) on a scale that would mean new employment for up to two million people. The conference at which this offer was made was hushed up, maligned or sneered at, to the best of their ability, by the capitalist newspapers, by the Federation of British Industries and by Anthony Eden. Nevertheless, it is significant that after the conference *The Times* spoke of the 'moderate and constructive' contributions, 'notably Mr. Nesterov'; stressed the atmosphere of Moscow as 'relaxed and unsuspicious'; and concluded that there was 'some indication that the object of the conference was not to score a point or to sow dissension but to keep open the road to a better understanding'.

It will not be out of place to recall to the labour movement that Britain had three similar opportunities before the war to expand trade with the U.S.S.R. and thus lay the foundations of peace in Europe—in 1922, when the Soviet Government offered a tremendous programme of economic co-operation at the Geneva Conference: in 1924, when the Anglo-Soviet treaties were signed by the first Labour Government: and in 1933 when a Soviet offer of the same kind, but involving smaller sums, was made in London at the World Economic Conference. In each case it was the Tories who struck the foul blow at the interests of the British people and of peace.

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They are intending to do it again. That is their reply, and the reply of their American patrons, to the weighty and historic Soviet offers of March-April, 1952. Attlee and his cronies, in official leadership of the labour movement, are hand in glove with them on this: there can be no illusions on that subject. But the mass of the people want a change from the dull, suicidal, malignant policy of hatred.

GENERAL ELECTIONS IN INDIA

AJOY GHOSH

(General Secretary, Communist Party of India)

PANIC has seized reactionaries in India and their friends and patrons abroad. The successes of the Democratic Front, at the head of which stood the Communist Party, in the recent general elections have upset all their calculations.

Mrs. Roosevelt has been rushed to India to sing the charms of the dollar land and entice India deeper into its parlour. Chester Bowles, Dean Acheson and President Truman have all declared that if India is to be saved from the 'menace of Communism', it must be given 'aid'.

Thus, speaking at a joint meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives on March 13, Dean Acheson said that India was fighting a desperate battle to save itself from Communism, and that the outcome of India's effort to achieve self-sufficiency in food in the next four years might well determine whether the sub-continent falls under Communist control. India is the 'most striking example of the need for urgent and effective action', he continued. He pointed to the unexpected strength shown by the Communist Party in the recent general elections. He further stated:

> The advice of all our observers on the ground is that unless the newly independent Government under Prime Minister Nehru can show substantial progress in economic development over the next five years there is the likelihood that in the next elections democratic forces will be endangered either by extremists or by Communists.

Nervous voices have been raised in India, too. Shankar Rao Deo, a member of the Congress Working Committee, speaking at a public meeting some weeks ago, stated: 'The defeat of the Congress by the Communists constitutes a very serious danger to democracy.'

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Commenting on the Travancore-Cochin results, the *Hindu*, Madras daily, said on January 13:

> In conclusion we would only say that not only the Congress but every other party in the country organised for constructive ends and resolved to function constitutionally, has a duty to do its bit not only to keep the Communists out of the seat of power but also to educate the public to the danger of allowing unchecked what is today a portent and what may soon become a menace.

The Bombay daily, *Free Press Journal*, wrote editorially on March 4:

> The spectacular successes of Communists in certain States is a warning that other States may follow suit.

Their reverses and more than that, the Democratic Front successes, certainly came as very much of a surprise to the Congress leaders. After Prime Minister Nehru's tour of Travancore-Cochin on the eve of the elections there, *Congress Sandesh* (English weekly bulletin) published by the Congress Central Parliamentary Board, declared confidently on December 3, 1951:

> Nehru has wielded the magic wand. Kerala (Travancore-Cochin) will now vote Congress back to power.

The results, however, soon belied these rosy hopes, and on January 7, the same paper wrote:

> The spectacular Communist and near-Communist victories have come as an eye-opener.

However, it was still inclined to regard the Left successes as an accident, and it added: 'But it is too early to say that these victories augur well for the Communists of Telengana.' Telengana —Telugu-speaking part of Hyderabad State—too, gave a rude shock to Congress expectations. On February 4, the *Congress Sandesh* had to grudgingly admit: 'The Communists, it must be conceded, have made good the boast that Telengana was behind them.'

Thus, the results of the first general elections in India under adult franchise were a shock to the reactionary circles, who had boldly predicted that the Congress would sweep the polls. Only the Communist Party of India had correctly analysed the situation. In its Manifesto, issued six months before the elections began, it had stated:

> The Congress knows that it has lost the support of the majority of our people. It knows that it is looked upon by them as a party of exploiters and betrayers. It knows that its appeal and exhortations no longer move them.

The Communist Party at the same time was keenly aware of the disunity in the ranks of the democratic forces, and had warned:

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> But it (Congress) hopes that the Democratic forces opposed to it would not be able to close their ranks, will fritter away their energy in mutual strifes and conflicts and will not be able to present a united opposition to its rule. This hope must not be allowed to materialise.

Its estimate of the Congress strength has been confirmed. Unfortunately its fears about democratic disunity have also proved correct.

The Congress failed to win the majority of votes in the country as a whole. It secured only 42 per cent of the votes cast—43 million out of 103 million (total electorate 176 million). It secured a majority in only four small States—Delhi, Coorg, Saurashtra and Bhopal—whose combined population is no more than 7.5 million. Owing to an undemocratic electoral system, it has a majority of seats in 18 out of the 22 State Assemblies on a minority vote. In the House of the People—lower house of the Central Parliament—it has 363 out of the 489 seats, and in the State Assemblies 2,248 out of the 3,278 seats (5 seats have yet to be filled). It has failed to win a majority of seats in Travancore-Cochin and Madras States.

When one compares these figures with the results of the 1946 elections, when Congress polled 80 to 90 per cent of the votes, one realises the heavy loss in influence and prestige that the Congress has suffered. The absence of democratic unity has prevented a trouncing of the Congress, but the Communist Party and the United Front, consisting of Communists and some Left parties and democratic groups, have emerged as the biggest opposition bloc with 37 seats in the House of the People and 236 seats in the State Assemblies. The Socialist Party which had put up over 2,000 candidates won only 12 seats in the House of the People and 128 seats in the State Assemblies. The Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party, led by the former Congress President, Acharya Kripalani, secured 10 seats in the House of the People and 78 in the State Assemblies. The Communist Party had united front agreements with it in Malabar and in several constituencies in Andhra. Parties of Hindu and Sikh communal reaction led by the Princes and feudal landlords won 14 seats in the House of the People and 119 in the State Assemblies. Their biggest successes were in Rajasthan, PEPSU, Madhya Bharat and Orissa. The defeat of the Congress in these States is eloquent commentary on the nature of the ' bloodless revolution ' brought about by Sardar Patel, on the policy of appeasing the Princes and feudal interests. Where the mass movement led by

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the Communists and the Left was strong there the parties of feudal reaction were decisively defeated, there they proved impotent.

In the majority of States, next to Congress, the highest number of votes were polled by Independents. The only exceptions were Travancore-Cochin, Hyderabad and Andhra. This shows the growing disintegration of the Congress, large sections having lost confidence in the Congress but not yet reposing trust in any political party. The Independents represent the vacillating masses who have not yet taken a definite position. The vacillation was, however, the least where the Party and the United Front were the strongest. In Andhra, for example, in the 63 seats contested by the Party, the voting figures are as follows:

Communists - - -	1,452,516
Congress - - - -	998,530
Independents - - -	586,185

What had given the Congress leaders the confidence to make bold prophecies about its expected successes? Their reliance in the first place was in the personal popularity of Nehru. On the eve of the elections, Nehru assumed the presidentship of the organisation, the arch-communal reactionary Tandon was forced to quit and an illusion was created that with Nehru at the helm the filth inside the Congress would be swept out and it would be revitalised. As the polling day approached nearer, more and more a hysteria round the name of Nehru was whipped up. Huge pictures of Nehru adorned the walls. Nehru himself made a whirlwind tour of the country, indulged in skilful demagogy. Other Congress leaders appealed, not to Congress programme or achievements but sought to exploit the great popularity of the Prime Minister. Thus, in an Appeal to Voters, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, India's Health Minister, declared:

> Do not forget your duty. Do not lend your ears to people who want you to turn against Congress. To vote for Congress is to strengthen Panditji's hands. The whole world holds him in high esteem. . . . Will you let down your old and faithful servants and Pandit Nehru?
>
> (*Congress Sandesh*, October 18, 1951).

All this had its effect as admitted by Nehru himself. In reply to a question by a correspondent whether he agreed that but for his campaigning the Congress would not have been in the strong position it was, he replied: 'It is a patent fact.'

(*Free Press Journal*, February 29, 1952).

Then, the Congress had unlimited resources, the entire State machinery was geared to help the Congress campaign. Dozens

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of corrupt practices were resorted to. There was terrorisation of voters, threats and intimidation, in particular Muslim voters were told that they would have to face serious consequences if they did not vote for Congress. There was bribery and buying up of votes. There was impersonation of voters. Even electoral rolls were not prepared properly—names of millions of voters, especially from the poorer classes, were missing.

The Congress leaders had also calculated that the Communist Party and the progressive forces had no chances in the elections. The Party had been the main target of governmental attacks. It was banned in Travancore-Cochin and Hyderabad and in a virtual state of illegality in the States of Madras and Bengal. The Telengana area had been under police and military occupation for over three years. All the leaders of the Party were either in jail or hunted. In Bengal, there were 250 Communist *detenus*. In the Punjab, leading functionaries were in jail or driven underground. Outstanding leaders of the Party like P. Sundarayya, Rajeshwar Rao, Basava Punniah, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Chandrasekhar Rao, Srinivas Rao, Dasrath Deb, Baba Gurbuksh Singh and others had to work underground. Hundreds of Communists, trade union and peasant leaders had been implicated in cases. Many of the candidates of the Party were in prison or had warrants against them. Then there was the vicious propaganda against the Communists that they had indulged in banditry, arson and murder in Telengana and other places, that they believed in violence for the sake of violence.

But the people had had enough of the regime of batons and bullets. They were seeing through the sham independence which the Congress leaders had claimed to have won. They had seen that the ruling party was a party of big capitalists and landlords, that it was a party which had tied India to the camp of the imperialists. The people, especially in areas where the Communist Party had led their struggles, where the Communist Party had organised the masses, workers, peasants and agricultural labourers, were determined to record their verdict against the four years of agony and bitterness, of suppresion, starvation and misery, which the Congress rule had brought them. In Andhra, in Travancore-Cochin, in Telengana, in Bengal, in Tripura, the elections grew into a mighty mass movement for agrarian reform, for adequate rations, for civil liberties, for a living wage. The movement swept into activity thousands of

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workers, agricultural labourers, peasants, artisans and the middle classes. The people, with the women at the forefront, showed marvels of heroism and initiative and discipline. They surmounted all difficulties of cadres, finance, organisation. They defied police terror and marched to the polling booths, like disciplined soldiers. The determination and enthusiasm of the people reminded one of the great upsurge of the post-war years. Red flags and flags of the parties of the United Front flew in the air in hundreds, slogans of unity, slogans against the Congress and the Government rent the air.

In Telengana where the Party and the Andhra Mahasabha led mighty battles for land and where the government had established virtual martial law, shooting and jailing tens of thousands of the leaders of the peasant struggles, the Democratic Front won the majority of seats—37 out of the 46 it contested, blowing to bits the lying Congress propaganda that the Communists here had acted as bandits, that they had alienated the people. It was in Nalgonda, the heart of the peasant struggle in Telengana, that the highest number of votes were polled by a candidate and it was a Communist leader, Ravi Narayan Reddi, who polled them. He secured 78 per cent of the votes polled, whereas Nehru secured only 64 per cent of the votes in his home constituency of Allahabad.

Winning 78 seats, in the Telugu-speaking areas—Andhra, parts of Madras State and Telengana with a population of 30 million—the Communist Party has emerged as the most powerful party, firmly entrenched in the agricultural workers and poor peasants, and making headway among the workers and the intelligentsia. In the Malayalee-speaking areas, too,—Malabar and Travancore-Cochin, which saw the epic battles of Punnappra and Vayalur in 1946—the Communists have emerged as a powerful force. In Bengal, the United Front has 45 seats, with 29 Communists. In Tripura, the Communist Party won both the Parliamentary seats, while 19 out of 30 seats in the Electoral College were won by the Communists and the United Front. In Orissa, the Punjab and PEPSU also, the Party won a number of seats—seven in Orissa, six in the Punjab and three in PEPSU.

It is clear now that the Government offensive against the Communists and the United Front has failed, the slanders against them proved utterly false. It is precisely in those areas where repression was heaviest, where police and military terror of the

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most fiendish kind had been unleashed, where hundreds had been jailed, tortured and shot, where women had been humiliated, molested and raped, that the Communists and the United Front won the most significant victories and the ruling party suffered its heaviest reverses.

The people have acclaimed the Communist Party as their own, for they have seen its self-sacrificing championship of their interests, its devotion and loyalty to their cause. Never before did the party enjoy greater influence, prestige and love than it does today. There has been a big swing towards it. Its unity appeal is finding greater and greater response. The latest evidence of it is an article in *Vigil,* KMPP paper founded by Archarya Kripalani, which convincingly argues the case for unity with the Communists, answers the objections to unity with them and makes an impassioned plea for understanding them, as subscribing to anti-Communism, it says, would strengthen the already entrenched vested interests.

The debacle suffered by the Socialist Party has been another source of anxiety to reaction. The Socialist leaders had loudly declared that they would capture at least 800 seats in the State Assemblies (out of 1,800 contested) and 100 seats in Parliament (out of 225 contested). They hoped to emerge as the biggest opposition force. In some States they even predicted they would form Ministries—in Travancore-Cochin, Vindhya Pradesh and Bihar. They were looking forward, too, to Socialist-Congress coalition governments in many other States. Reactionary circles in India and abroad had also expected that even if a large number of votes were cast against the Congress, they would go to the Socialists, with whom, as Nehru said, the Congress had 'much in common', canalising popular discontent into 'safe' channels.

All these hopes have been rudely shattered. It is true that the Socialists polled a large percentage of votes. This happened because they put up nearly 2,000 candidates and also because the selected candidates had in the majority of cases nothing to do with Socialism and were given the Socialist tickets only on the basis of their local influence. The Socialists have considerable influence in some parts of the country, especially in Bombay City, Bihar and U.P., though in the main the people have rejected the Right-wing Socialist policy of sabotage of mass struggles, refusal to forge democratic unity and hostility towards the Soviet Union and People's China. The Socialist leaders, at any rate, played a dis-

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ruptionist role and, as figures reveal, in many places the Congress won simply because the democratic vote was split, otherwise the Congress could have been routed and democratic governments established in a number of States.

Even now the Socialist leaders have not altered their stand. For instance, in Madras and Travancore-Cochin where the Congress has been decisively defeated, securing only 152 out of 357 and 46 out of 108 seats respectively, the Socialist leaders' attitude of joining 'neither the Congress nor the Communist-sponsored United Democratic Front' is helping the Congress, preventing the formation of democratic governments. But the urge for unity is growing. A process of disintegration inside the Socialist Party has set in. Hundreds of ordinary members, district and even some provincial leaders are resigning from the party.

The victories of the Democratic Front in the South have given confidence to the people that the Congress can be defeated. Now they are demanding the formation of Coalition Ministries of all progressive non-Congress M.L.A.s (Members of Legislative Assembly). Last month 165 non-Congress M.L.A.s of Madras met in a convention. They set up a United Democratic Front, discussed a minimum programme calculated to meet the immediate demands of the people. A Sub-Committee was set up to canvass further support for the Front and finalise the programme. The prospect of a non-Congress democratic Ministry in Madras has filled the ruling circles with consternation. For it would demonstrate what can be achieved by a people's Ministry, it would show that the problems of hunger and scarcity are not 'natural calamities' but the result of Congress policies of appeasing the vested interests. Such a Ministry would restore civil liberties, release the mass leaders, end black-marketing and profiteering, raise living standards. Such a Ministry would inspire other Provinces, too, and hasten Congress downfall there.

That is why the Congress and the imperialists who stand behind it are panicky. The scare of the 'Red bogy' is being raised by Truman, Acheson and Co. for two reasons. One, they are genuinely apprehensive that India is fast going out of the clutches of reaction, upsetting all the aggressive plans in Asia. Secondly, they want to put further pressure on the Nehru Government and make it completely subservient to their dictates, they want economic domination of the country, they want the doors fully opened for dollar investments and penetration. The Nehru Govern-

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ment is yielding to this pressure. It has already signed a humiliating Technical Aid agreement with the U.S. Government. The Nehru Government, while relying on imperialist help, is internally trying to consolidate reaction and continue with its suppressive policies. Two months ago, it released all Razakar prisoners in Hyderabad who had been charged with heinous crimes—murder, loot, rape, arson against the people—while hundreds of Communist *detenus* still languish in jails all over the country. The Nehru Government, without even waiting for the new Parliament to meet, has extended by another six months the Preventive Detention Act, giving the government powers to arrest and detain any person without even a trial. A fresh wave of repression has been started. In Bengal, for instance, it has re-arrested several of the *detenus* released on parole during the elections. They include four victorious candidates—three elected to the State Assembly and one to Parliament. The people are rallying against this new offensive and a powerful movement for civil liberties drawing in broader and broader sections is gaining momentum.

The elections have revealed a number of weaknesses which the democratic movement must overcome in order to march forward. The most important is the disunity of the working class and the weakness of the trade union movement. Only a strong working class can lead the national liberation struggle and unify the democratic forces. The election results showed that the Communist Party is not yet firmly embedded in the working class—in the majority of the big industrial centres of the country the Congress won the majority of seats. Building the unity of the working class and the establishment of the leadership of the Party over it are the key tasks facing us today. The Party has also to strengthen its base among the peasantry, particularly among the poor peasants and agricultural workers, for, except in Telengana, Andhra, Kerala and Tripura, the peasantry has not yet been drawn into the democratic movement.

Further, the democratic movement is still very weak in a number of States—Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh and others—where the Party polled poorly. The mass organisations—of workers, peasants, youth, women, students, still remain very weak, the radicalisation of the masses has yet to be consolidated and given organisational form. Only a United Front based on mass organisations, on the unity of the exploited masses,

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can be firm, can defeat the attempts of the reactionaries to disrupt it, and can lead the developing mass movement forward. Otherwise it will remain a top alliance. The forging of a United Front solidly based on the granite foundation of the basic masses —workers, toiling peasants and the agricultural labourers, drawing into struggle all anti-imperialists and democratic parties and elements desirous of fighting for a popular government—this is another key task before the Party.

The peace movement, too, has to be widened and deepened, broad-based Peace Committees of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia, of all those who want peace and hate war have to be formed. The peace movement has to overcome many lags, it is still very much behind the needs and possibilities of the situation.

Vast masses have expressed their confidence in the Communist Party. They expect them to lead them forward. It has entailed heavy responsibilities on the Party, responsibilities which can only be discharged if the Party is strengthened, if the ideological political level of its cadres is raised, if thousands of new members are drawn into the Party, if educational and popular agitational literature is brought out on a mass scale.

The Party is trying to equip itself for the new tasks. Learning from the illustrious example of the great Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin, learning from the Chinese Communist Party, drawing the lessons of the recent elections, there is no doubt the Party will go forward leading the Indian people, in unity with the world peoples, in the struggle for peace, freedom and prosperity.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

THE TRADE DISPUTES ACT OF 1927

So we are faced with this repressive Bill. . . . We for our part must remember that we as workers must organise in ever greater numbers; that concentration and co-operation must be our work, and that we must build up our movement industrially and politically. The power is ours when we have the courage to take it; and when we have political control the game of playing the statesman must cease, and our efforts should be devoted to correcting first the repressiveness of reactionary laws, and then onward to bring the complete revolution of society as we know it today. . . .

From *The Government Trade Union Bill*,
by R. Coppock, May, 1927.

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PEACE MANIFESTO

WILLIAM MORRIS

[We reprint the manifesto written 75 years ago this month by William Morris, then treasurer of an anti-war body (the Eastern Question Association), at a time when the Tory Government of Disraeli (who had made himself the Earl of Beaconsfield) was carrying on propaganda and preparations for war in alliance with Turkey against Russia.—Ed. L.M.]

UNJUST WAR

To the Working-men of England

Friends and fellow-citizens,

There is danger of war; bestir yourselves to face that danger; if you go to sleep, saying we do not understand it, and the danger is far off, you may wake and find the evil fallen upon you, for even now it is at the door. Take heed in time and consider it well, for a hard matter it will be for most of us to bear war-taxes, war-prices, war-losses of wealth and work and friends and kindred: We shall pay heavily, and you, friends of the working-classes, will pay the heaviest.

And what shall we buy at this heavy price? Will it be glory, and wealth and peace for those that come after us? Alas! no; for these are the gains of a *just* war; but if we wage the *unjust* war that fools and cowards are bidding us wage today, our loss of wealth will buy us fresh losses of wealth, our loss of work will buy us loss of hope, our loss of friends and kindred will buy us enemies from father to son.

An unjust war, I say: for do not be deceived! If we go to war with Russia now, it will not be to punish her for evil deeds done, or to hinder her from evil deeds hereafter, but to put down just insurrection against the thieves and murderers of Turkey; to stir up a faint pleasure in the hearts of the do-nothing fools that cry out without meaning for a 'spirited foreign policy'; to guard our well-beloved rule in India from the coward fear of an invasion that may happen a hundred years hence—or never; to exhibit our army and navy once more before the wondering eyes of Europe; to give a little hope to our holders of Turkish bonds: —Working-men of England, which of these things do you think worth dying for? Do all of them rolled into one make that body of *English Interests* we have heard of lately?

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And who are they who flaunt in our faces the banner inscribed on one side *English Interests,* and on the other *Russian Misdeeds?* Who are they that are leading us into war? Let us look at these saviours of England's honour, these champions of Poland, these scourges of Russia's iniquities! Do you know them?—Greedy gamblers on the Stock Exchange, idle officers of the army and navy (poor fellows!), worn-out mockers of the Clubs, desperate purveyors of exciting war-news for the comfortable breakfast tables of those who have nothing to lose by war, and lastly, in the place of honour, the Tory Rump, that we fools, weary of peace, reason and justice, chose at the last election to 'represent' us: and over all their captain, the ancient place-hunter, who, having at last climbed into an Earl's chair, grins down thence into the face of England, while his empty heart and shifty head is compassing the stroke that will bring on our destruction perhaps, our confusion certainly:—O shame and double shame, if we march under such a leadership as this in an unjust war against a people who are *not* our enemies, against Europe, against freedom, against nature, against the hope of the world.

Working-men of England, one word of warning yet: I doubt if you know the bitterness of hatred against freedom and progress that lies at the hearts of a certain part of the richer classes in this country: their newspapers veil it in a kind of decent language; but do but hear them talking among themselves, as I have often, and I know not whether scorn or anger would prevail in you at their folly and insolence: —these men cannot speak of your order, of its aims, of its leaders without a sneer or an insult: these men if they had the power (may England perish rather) would thwart your just aspirations, would silence you, would deliver you bound hand and foot forever to irresponsible capital—and these men, I say it deliberately, are the heart and soul of the party that is driving us to an unjust war: —can the Russian people be your enemies or mine like these men are, who are the enemies of all justice? They can harm us but little now, but, if war comes, *unjust* war, with all its confusion and anger, who shall say what their power may be, what step backward we may make? Fellow citizens, look to it, and if you have any wrongs to be redressed, if you cherish your most worthy hope of raising your whole order peacefully and solidly, if you thirst for leisure and knowledge, if you long to lessen those inequalities which have been our stumbling-block since the beginning of the world, then cast aside sloth and cry out

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against an UNJUST WAR, and urge us of the Middle Classes to do no less, so that we may all protest solemnly and perseveringly against our being dragged (and who knows for why?) into an UNJUST WAR, in which, if we are victorious, we shall win shame, loss and rebuke; and if we are overpowered—what then?

Working-men of England I do not believe that in the face of your strenuous opposition, the opposition of those men whom war most concerns, any English Government will be so mad as to trap England and Europe into an UNJUST WAR.

A Lover of Justice.

May 11, 1877.

JOSEPH WINTERNITZ

We regret to record the sudden death of Joseph Winternitz, a valued contributor for many years to the LABOUR MONTHLY *and a former member of the Editorial Board. Joseph Winternitz, born in Oxford where his father was teacher in Sanskrit, brought up in Czechoslovakia, and trained as a mathematician, early became a socialist, and after the 1914-18 war developed his activities as a Communist first in Czechoslovakia, then in Germany and lastly in Britain. In all three countries he played a very active part in popularising Marxism amongst the workers. In Germany he was for a time in charge of Party education in the years before Hitler: and only after Czechoslovakia was overrun in 1939 did he come back to Britain. He was a Marxist scholar with a penetrating grasp of political economy (in 1949-50 he was Professor of Political Economy in the Humboldt University in Berlin) and his other writings included a short history of the Second International. Amongst his outstanding contributions to* LABOUR MONTHLY *were his article, "The Anti-Communist Crusade, Then and Now," on the occasion of the centenary of the Communist Manifesto in 1948; and "Critique of the Keynesian Theory," a review of John Eaton's "Marx Against Keynes" in 1951.*

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Book Reviews

AN INDIAN CHILDHOOD

Seven Summers by Mulk Raj Anand. (239 pp. Hutchinson & Co. 9s. 6d.)

Books about childhood often disappoint, if for no other reason than the fact that they are written by adults; and the adult mind inevitably tends to see childhood either through the prism of nostalgic sentimentality which idealises and distorts or the translucent screen of reticence and reserve which shuts off a great part of the strange horizon of a child's universe. Anand's *Seven Summers*, however, largely satisfies. Partly autobiographical, partly fictional, it combines imaginative inventiveness with the authentic touch of reality.

Krishna, the child-hero, is the son of the Head Clerk attached to a Dogra regiment of the old mercenary Indian Army whose duty it was to march up and down the Grand Trunk Road in order to impress the stranger within the gate, to inspire confidence in the heart of the stranger within the gate, and to intimidate the people. The period is the Augustan age of British Imperialism, the years immediately preceding the first World War, when the sun was still shining without interruption over the Empire. The portrait of the child with all his egotism, impressionability, and sensitiveness is drawn with great verve. But even more clearly emerges the personality of the mother, a woman burdened with the piety and superstitions of an old culture in decay, yet possessing a strength of character and capacity for sympathy which, if it is not wisdom, is something very akin to it. And beyond the life of the family, there is the vast landscape of Indian humanity, infinitely colourful and various, evoked here, perhaps unavoidably, in its highlights and overtones, but convincingly and with rare perceptiveness.

IQBAL SINGH.

MARXIST TEXTBOOK

Dialectical Materialism. An Introductory Course. By Maurice Cornforth. Vol. 1. Materialism and the Dialectical Method (144 pp. Lawrence and Wishart. 7s. 6d.)

MAURICE CORNFORTH says in his foreword that he has tried to confine himself to 'a straightforward exposition of the leading ideas of dialectical materialism'. There can be no doubt that he has succeeded admirably in the task he has set himself. This is the first part of an introductory course and deals with the basic ideas of Marxist materialism, and the dialectical method. A second part will deal with historical materialism and the theory of knowledge. The author is well known for his simple, lucid and convincing style of writing in handling difficult philosophical questions. This book is no exception. It might be thought that for a clear presentation of the essentials of the subject one could not do better than Stalin's fundamental statement in his *Dialectical and Historical Materialism.* That is a brilliant but condensed treatment. The great merit of Cornforth's work is that he not only gives a more detailed exposition of the principles, without being sidetracked into abstract philosophical controversy, but that he provides an abundance of simple illustrations which are of great assistance in helping the reader to think dialectically and to apply what he has learnt to the practical problems of the working class movement. C.P.D.

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CHINESE BOOKS

The People's New Literature, by Chou En-lai, Kuo Mo-jo, Mao Tun, and Chou Yung (136 pp., 3*s.*); *Rhymes of Li Yu-tsai and Other Stories*, by Chao Shu-li (196 pp., 7*s.* 6*d.*); *The Moving Force* by Tsao Ming (214 pp., 10*s.* 6*d.*); *It Happened at Willow Castle*, by Shih Yen (72 pp., 3*s.*); *Struggle Against Counter-Struggle* by Li Chih-hua (74 pp., 2*s.*); Cultural Press, Peking. Collet's London.

THE translations of new Chinese literature which are now making a welcome appearance in Britain will interest both lovers of literature and all who wish to enrich their knowledge of the great popular movements of New China. Accounts of the history and achievements of the new literature by some of China's leading writers and critics are contained in the volume *The People's New Literature*. This volume consists of four reports delivered at the first All-China Conference of Writers and Artists in 1949. They show the great unity achieved by Chinese writers in support of the national liberation struggle. They also show how seriously Chinese writers have striven to put into practice Mao Tse-tung's theories on art and literature. The writer of New China regards serving the people as the highest aim of his life and art. He lives and works with workers and peasants and fights side by side with the soldiers. It is for the common people that he writes and it is they who form the bulk of his readership. The heroes of the new literature are peasants, workers and soldiers and its themes are the land reform, women's emancipation, the production drive and the liberation struggle.

Chao Shu-li, the author of *The Rhymes of Li Yu-tsai*, is the best of the writers who came into prominence in the Liberated Areas during the anti-Japanese war. The stories in this collection combine a mature craftsmanship with an intimate knowledge of the peasants, and have been described by the eminent critic Chou Yang as the representative work of Liberated Areas literature. It tells the story of the liberation of a village from the control of a crafty landlord whose power has remained unshaken through various regimes and who, owing to the weakness of an inexperienced cadre, is able to retain control even after the military liberation of the area. Li Yu-tsai is the local composer of ballads and he has an apposite rhyme for every situation. No sooner are they composed than they are on the lips of everyone in the village and their popularity does much to speed the downfall of the tyrant. Chao Shu-li does not indulge in lengthy descriptions, yet in spite of his economy of style all the characters and situations are brought to life with great vividness.

The Moving Force by the woman writer Tsao Ming is a full-length novel about the efforts of the workers at a power station in Manchuria, which has been wrecked by the Japanese and abandoned by the Kuomintang, to restore the generation of current. *It Happened at Willow Castle* is a well-translated short story about life in the People's Liberation Army, and *Struggle Against Counter Struggle* is a play about the revolutionary movement among the peasants of Manchuria after the surrender of Japan.

JOHN CHINNERY.

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course! after those Ten Days That Shook the World. This time the faces are Chinese.' And *next* time . . . ? Indeed, May Day is the time for looking backward as well as forward; what a tremendous way we and our fathers have come; each new May Day shows how far the hand drives on across the dial. From afar in space and time let us turn to here and now: a son writes of his father, a Catholic, who did not live to see this May Day. He writes on behalf of himself and three brothers: 'I would like to tell you how much *L.M.* meant to my father; he found it truly a beacon of light. It was the last thing he read. He hated capitalism for what it does to human beings in war and in unemployment; he did something to help consign it to the rubbish heap of history. You may be sure we four will do what he wanted us to do to carry the message of socialism to more and more people, until man's inhumanity to man is ended. For his sake, I thank you.' These are true descendants of those Chartists.

SUBSCRIBING TO DEMOCRACY

To end by quoting once more from that hundred-year-old journal: 'He who subscribes to the Paper, subscribes to democracy. . . . Then let him canvass among friends and acquaintances. Let him remember that this is indispensable, and to be of use, must be immediate; and then a surer success will attend this Paper of the people than attends even the gold-supported papers of the wealthy classses.' The means for such a canvass is on the back cover, the Free Specimen Copy Form. It is there to be used with the same enthusiasm that can be sensed in that Chartist appeal. Next month I hope to describe some splendid results by people using it. Lastly, a welcome this May Day to the gift which has just reached us from the other side of the world from 'Two Grateful New Zealanders'. And to a new regular, 'Chicago', whose first gift will be listed next month. And again, to the Canadian sending '$5 to a worthy Magazine of International Labour', to mention only a few. During March the fund reached

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